

BRG 84-1-3-11

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BALTIMORE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

SURVEY OF RETAIL STORES

Baltimore, Maryland

December, 1966

RESOURCE CENTER  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

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### INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1965, the Baltimore Community Relations Commission initiated a survey of employment in the retail stores of Baltimore City.

The purpose of the survey is twofold: a) to describe the employment statistics as they exist, and b) to spotlight the employment areas in which minority group persons are numerically under-represented.

It was thought that, as corollaries of such a study, there would emerge: a) an opportunity to inform employers of an overall non-discriminatory approach to hiring and training, and b) a delineation of the employment areas in which properly trained unemployed young people could expect employment.

After meeting with representatives of the Retail Merchants Association, the CRC staff devised a suitable questionnaire. The questions covered considerations such as: a) equal employment opportunity for all persons, b) facilities for employees, c) sources of employee recruitment, d) the areas in which job applicants are inadequately prepared, and e) the numbers of employees (total male, total Negro male, total female, total Negro female) in each of nine job categories.

Each of the 38 stores polled received a letter from the CRC staff explaining the purpose of the survey and seeking cooperation to achieve the survey's goals. Thirty (30) retail stores returned answers.



### I. THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

The thirty retail stores reporting have a total of 11,746 workers. Slightly more than 1,900 of the total reported work force are Negro. Of the total 11,746, 3,876 are males and 7,838 are females. 886 of the males are Negro; 1,034 of the females are Negro.

#### Analysis

Considering the population figures for the City of Baltimore, the relatively small number of Negro employees in retail stores seems surprising.

According to figures published in December, 1966\* there are 374,740 Negroes in a total population of 914,000.

Thus, while about 40% of the City's population is Negro, this group forms only 17% of retail store employees. These figures suggest the possibility of discriminatory practices, past or present, intentional or unintentional, in retail store employment. Further indications emerge when specific job categories are analyzed, as will be done in the following sections.

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\* The News American: Sunday December 11, 1966

## II. PERCENTAGES IN THE JOB CATEGORIES

50% of the total reported employees are Sales Workers. In descending percentage order are: Office and Clerical 18%. Officials and Managers about 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>%. Service Workers 9%, Skilled Craftsmen and Unskilled Laborers each 5%, Semi-Skilled Operatives 4%, Professionals and Technicians each 1%.

The Percentage of Negroes in each job category is:

1) Officials and Managers	2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> %
2) Professionals	14%
3) Technicians	4%
4) Sales Workers	8%
5) Office and Clerical	10%
6) Skilled Craftsmen	23%
7) Semi-Skilled Operatives	37%
8) Unskilled Laborers	54%
9) Service Workers	60%

A further breakdown of the percentage of Negroes in each job category reveals that in six (6) job categories, Professionals, Sales Workers, Skilled Craftsmen, Semi-Skilled Operatives, Unskilled Laborers, and Service Workers, the percentage of Negro males is higher than that of Negro females. The categories of Technicians and Office and Clerical, however, contain higher female than male percentages. In the Officials and Managers category, the percentage is equal.

### Analysis

The low percentage of Negroes in certain job categories, e.g., the 8% Negro total of Sales Workers, the 4% of Technicians and the 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>% of Officials and Managers, and the high percentage in one job category - the 60% of Service Workers - seems to require an explanation.

The explanation ought to be found in one or more of the following elements: a) the number who apply for the job, b) the qualifications of the applicants, c) possible historical patterns of discrimination whose influence still exists, d) the means of recruitment used by the retail store.

Two of the above elements are the subject of inquiry of the questionnaire. A rather specific answer was required of (d) and a much less specific one of (b). The responses to these two will be evaluated in their proper order.

### III. NUMERICAL ANALYSIS BY JOB CATEGORY

1. Officials and Managers -  
     Total Male: 716 of which 18 are Negro  
     Total Female: 501 of which 13 are Negro
2. Professionals -  
     Total Male: 74 of which 12 are Negro  
     Total Female: 31 of which 3 are Negro
3. Technicians -  
     Total Male: 94 of which 1 is Negro  
     Total Female: 14 of which 3 are Negro
4. Sales Workers -  
     Total Male: 1302 of which 104 are Negro  
     Total Female: 4203 of which 326 are Negro
5. Office and Clerical -  
     Total Male: 288 of which 28 are Negro  
     Total Female: 1833 of which 196 are Negro
6. Skilled Craftsmen -  
     Total Male: 309 of which 80 are Negro  
     Total Female: 324 of which 64 are Negro'
7. Semi-Skilled Operatives -  
     Total Male: 339 of which 141 are Negro  
     Total Female: 112 of which 27 are Negro



## 8. Unskilled Laborers -

Total Male: 313 of which 200 are Negro

Total Female: 285 of which 120 are Negro

## 9. Service Workers -

Total Male: 441 of which 312 are Negro

Total Female: 534 of which 282 are Negro

Analysis

Of the total reported employees (11,746), 1,920 are Negro.

There are 886 Negro males and 1,034 Negro females

31 Negro Officials and Managers out of 1,217, 15 Negro Professionals out of 105, 4 Negro Technicians out of 108 are numbers that tell their own story in the context of an 11,746 total. Somewhat the same story is indicated in each job category.

Once again we point out that the numbers of Negro Service Workers and Unskilled Laborers is disproportionately large.

IV. EMPLOYMENT POLICY

One of the questions of more than passing significance asked of the retail stores was: Has a company-wide employment policy been established with procedures put into effect to assure that equal opportunity is given to all persons without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin?

Of the 30 replies, only two (2) answered "No".

Evidently, official store employment policy is in line with the requirements of the law prohibiting discrimination.

A second significant question was: Are there any employee facilities (i.e., drinking fountains, restrooms, recreational areas, lunchrooms, etc.) at this reporting unit which are provided for employees on a racially separate basis?

Of the 30 replies, only one (1) answered "Yes". There is a good correlation, therefore, between the answers to the two questions.

### Analysis

The efforts of the last ten years to educate business concerns to the requirements of the law concerning equal opportunity of employment and unrestricted employee facilities seems to have yielded desirable results in the retail stores covered by this survey.

## V. JOB SKILLS AND PREPARATION

Two similar queries of the questionnaire were: List the reasons, in your judgment, why there are no Negroes in some of your job categories; and, briefly list the general areas in which job applicants seem to be inadequately prepared and enumerate those which are particularly applicable to Negroes.

Of the 30 responses, sixteen (16) did not answer either question.

Eighteen (18) who did answer the questions asserted remarkably similar elements as answers.

Eight (8) listed "lack of experience".

Seven (7) cited "poor educational background with emphasis on the three 'R's'".

Six (6) said that there is a "lack of candidates" or a lack of "qualified candidates".

### Analysis

It is not surprising that "Lack of experience" is a reason given above. The reason for this "lack" must lie in the employment situation of the past. One remedy: On-the-job training programs.

"Educational background" is the province of the schools and lies outside the immediate interests of this survey.

The lack of candidates can be affected positively by methods of recruitment. (See Chapter VI)

## VI. MEANS OF RECRUITMENT

The questionnaire asked: What sources are used for the recruitment of employees?

Responses:	Newspapers	27
	Employment Agencies	14
	Employee Referrals	16
	Urban League	3
	Public Schools	3
	Walk-ins	3
	Unions	2
	Colleges	1

### Analysis

Newspapers are evidently widely used for the purpose of recruitment. The only suggestion deemed necessary in this regard is that advertising monies be spent to reach all segments of the population through appropriate newspapers.

About half the respondents use Agencies and Referrals.

In effect, the three sources of recruitment mentioned above are the only overall significant sources.

There seems to be needed a strong, accurate program of information describing the many agencies of various organizations which are attempting specifically to train and place minority group persons in the field of retail merchandising.



VII. CONCLUSION

By way of conclusion, we offer the following summary of observations substantiated by the survey figures.

Numerically, Negroes form a small number of the total retail store employees. Slightly more than 1,900 Negroes are in the total 11,746 employees.

In the numerically largest job category - Sales Workers - 92% are white, 8% Negro. Office and Clerical Workers, the second largest category, is 90% white, 10% Negro.

The heaviest concentration of Negro percentages is in Service Workers (60%), Unskilled Laborers (54%) and Semi-Skilled Operatives (37%).

The 1,920 Negroes in the total reported work force are divided into 886 Negro males and 1,034 Negro females.

31 Negro Officials and Managers of the total 1,217, 15 Negro Professionals of the total 105, 4 Negro Technicians of the total 108 are numbers that tell their own story in the context of an 11,746 total.

Company-wide employment policy assuring equal opportunity is characteristic of the reporting stores. Our survey statistics indicate, however, that while equal opportunity is the aim, it is perhaps not as fully carried out in practice as management believes. Employee facilities are provided on a non-restrictive basis.

Negro job applicants lack experience, desirable educational background or simply do not approach the retail stores. On-the-job training, motivation and realistic school curricula could help to im-

prove this area of consideration.

Newspapers, Employment Agencies and Employee Referrals are the most widely used means of recruitment.

There is needed a comprehensive program of information which lists and describes the various organizations attempting to train and place minority group persons in retail merchandising.

Finally, serious study to see whether further positive action is needed to assure real equal opportunity employment in retail stores might well be accomplished in informal meetings involving retail store management and members of the Community Relations Commission.

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